

Message Text

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ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-09 IO-14 ISO-00 DHA-02 VOE-00
INSE-00 SCA-01 SSO-00 SP-02 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07
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-----091550Z 002688 /41

O 091457Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1060
USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS ATHENS 5397

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF
SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE BOAT CASE

REF: ATHENS 5115

THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE HAS BEEN RECEIVED BY TELEX FROM THE MORNOS
SHIPPING CO AT ATHENS. AS THE ADDRESSEES WILL NOTE IT RELATES
TO THE VIETNAMESE BOAT CASE REFERRED TO IN THE REFERENCED TELEGRAM
QUOTE

TO: JAPANESE EMBASSY IN ATHENS

COPIES TO:

- MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
FOURTH DIRECTION FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS
(ATTN: MR KOTAKIS)
- MINISTRY OF MARITIME AFFAIRS
- UNION OF GREEK OWNERS
- U.S. EMBASSY IN ATHENS
- . U.N.O. ATHENS OFFICE

THIS IS MORNOS SHIPPING CO S.A.
19 AMORIOU AND ACADEMIAS STR.,
ATHENS, GREECE
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TELEX 21-198 PHONE 3601-433 3603-083

ON 27TH MAY 1977 OUR SHIP "PTOLEMAIS" PICKED UP FIFTEEN PEOPLE
AT POSITION LATITUDE 05 DEG 11 MIN LONGITUDE 106 DEG 57 MIN. TWO
OF WHOM ARE WOMEN, ONE EIGHT MONTHS PREGNANT, WHO HAD BEEN DRIFTING
AT SEA IN AN DISABLED OPEN BOAT FOR TEN DAYS, WITH AN SOS SIGN

OUR VESSEL WAS BOUND FOR NAGOYA, JAPAN, AND WE IMMEDIATELY CONTACTED OUR AGENTS IN TOKYO REQUESTING THEM TO ARRANGE FOR THESE PEOPLE WHO DECLARED THEMSELVES TO BE SOUTH VIETNAMESE REFUGEES TO DISEMBARK ON ARRIVAL

OUR AGENTS CONTACTED THE JAPANESE IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES, THE UNITED NATIONS JAPAN OFFICE, AND THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN TOKYO, BUT WERE ADVISED THAT IN ORDER FOR THE REFUGEES TO BE ALLOWED TO ENTER JAPAN THE GREEK GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO GIVE A GUARANTEE TO TAKE THEM OVER IN CASE THE UNITED STATES REFUSED TO ACCEPT THEM

WE WOULD COMMENT THAT WE FAIL TO UNDERSTAND WHY THE GREEK GOVERNMENT SHOULD GIVE SUCH A GUARANTEE JUST BECAUSE THE VESSEL WHICH FOUND THE REFUGEES WAS UNDER GREEK FLAG

NEVERTHELESS, WE CONTACTED THE GREEK AUTHORITIES HERE WHO REFUSED TO ISSUE SUCH A GUARANTEE, BUT ADVISED US THAT THE JAPANESE HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO ALLOW THEM TO LAND

WE ALSO CONTACTED THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN ATHENS FOR ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE, FEELING THAT AS THE REFUGEES EXPRESSED THE WISH TO GO TO THE UNITED STATES, THE AMERICAN AUTHORITIES WOULD BE ABLE TO ASSIST. THE AMERICAN EMBASSY DID NOTHING HOWEVER EXCEPT TO PUT US IN TOUCH WITH THE UNITED NATIONS IN ATHENS

ALL THESE NEGOTIATION TOOK UP TO THE 1ST OF JUNE, AT WHICH TIME THE UNITED NATIONS IN ATHENS THROUGH THEIR OFFICES IN GENEVA AND TOKYO TOOK THE MATTER UP

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THE "PTOLEMAIS" ARRIVED IN JAPAN ON 4TH JUNE AND FINISHED LOADING ON 6TH JUNE. SHE IS NOW WAITING AT YOKOHAMA UNABLE TO SAIL AS THE REFUGEES ARE STILL ON BOARD

THE UNITED NATIONS, IN SPITE OF ALL THEIR EFFORTS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAIN PERMISSION FROM THE JAPANESE AUTHORITIES FOR THE REFUGEES TO LAND, OR THE NECESSARY GUARANTEE FROM THE GREEK GOVERNMENT

AT THE SAME TIME THE CAPTAIN OF THE VESSEL HAS BEEN MAKING INTENSIVE EFFORTS IN JAPAN WITHOUT ANY RESULT FROM THE GREEK AND AMERICAN EMBASSIES THERE, NOR FROM THE JAPANESE AUTHORITIES

THE POSITION IS NOW GETTING INTOLERABLE FOR US AS SHIPOWNERS AS WE ARE LOSING A SUBSTANTIAL SUM OF MONEY A DAY BECAUSE OUR VESSEL SAVED LIFE AT SEA

WE ARE POINTING OUT THAT ONE OF THE WOMAN REFUGEES IS HEAVILY PREGNANT AND OUR SHIP HAS NO FACILITIES FOR GIVING HER MEDICAL ATTENTION. ANY CONSEQUENCES OF HER BEING LEFT ON BOARD WILL NOT

BE OUR RESPONSIBILITY

WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT THIS SORT OF INCIDENT IS AGAINST THE
INTERESTS OF THE SAFETY OF HUMAN LIFE. WE WILL CERTAINLY BE
MAKING A FULL REPORT OF THE INCIDENT TO THE GREEK SHIPPING PRESS
FOR THE INFORMATION OF OTHER GREEK OWNERS

IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE, YOU ARE REQUESTED TO ALLOW THEM TO LAND
TO ENABLE OUR SHIP TO SAIL

MORNACO

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KUBISCH

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Message Attributes

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